

Date: 4 May 1983.  
Interview with: Gussie Booker.  
Interview by: T. Welliver.  
Place: 1655 Foster St., Evanston.  
Observations: Interview took place at meeting of Senior Citizens' Club. The interview was interrupted at various times.

Q. I'm interested in finding out what it was like to live in Evanston in the 1920's and 1930's.

A. I don't think I can help you very much.

Q. Were you born here, in Evanston?

A. No, I came from Georgia.

Q. When did you move to Evanston?

A. In 1921.

Q. How old were you then?

A. I was sixteen years old.

Q. What were things like in the South when you were growing up?

A. Things were all right there. Everybody talks about how bad the South was, with segregation and everything, but there really wasn't any segregation there. We could use the Y.M.C.A. and go to the movies.

Q. Did you run into any difficulties in Evanston?

A. No, I never had any troubles here.

Q. Did you go to school in Evanston?

A. No, I was married and I was working. I started working in a laundry, for \$16 a week, then I worked in a store. I joined the Y.M.C.A. about that time. They chose me as a delegate to go to Michigan for the spring festival there.

Q. Was that the Y.M.C.A. on Emerson St.?

A. Yes, the one on Emerson.

Q. Why did your parents come to Evanston?

A. I don't know why they came. I came first with my husband, and they came up later, with my grandparents.

Q. Where did they work?

A. My grandfather worked at the Marks factory. My mother was a maid, and she raised four children. We worked up to where we could buy a little house--at 1828 Ashland.

Q. Did you belong to any clubs?





A. I was in the Elks, but my husband wasn't. I've been in the choir at the Ebenezer Church since 1922. I was also in the Service Guild at the Ebenezer Church.

Q. What did the Service Guild do?

A. We raised money for the church. We were also in the V.F.W.

Q. I heard that the Elks clubs were segregated.

A. Yes, the Elks were all segregated. We met at the Y.M.C.A. I don't know if the black Elks are still around.

Q. What about the V.F.W?

A. They are still separate.

Q. Is there any contact between the two?

A. There is very close contact now, but not in the old days. I used to work in the cloakroom at the white Elks club. But we never had any meetings together, even around 1930.

Q. Do you remember when Jourdain was elected?

A. I didn't pay any attention to politics.

